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GSU View

University Newsletters

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# GSU View, 2015-03-02

Office of Marketing and Communications

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## FEATURE

### GSU Board of Trustees Passes Vision 2020



At its Friday, February 27 meeting, the GSU Board of Trustees unanimously approved Vision 2020, GSU's strategic plan that will guide the university's development for the next five years.

The strategic plan establishes GSU's Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and details its Core Values and eight Institutional Goals. GSU President Dr. Elaine P. Maimon lauded the plan as a guide that will help us "learn from the past as we plan for the future."

The planning process, which began in 2013, has engaged the entire university in a broad-based assessment and analysis of options for the university's strategic direction going forward.

Board of Trustees Chairman Brian Mitchell praised President Maimon and Provost Bordelon for the campus-wide collaboration which resulted in Vision 2020.

#### **Proposed Budget Cuts Discussed**

With that future in mind, Dr. Maimon told the Board that the serious budget cuts being proposed by Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner would hurt GSU and higher education across the state. She noted that even a 10 percent cut in appropriations would "change the nature of this institution in important ways," and that if Governor Rauner's proposed 31.5 percent reduction were enacted, it would result in an "unrecognizable landscape in higher education for decades to come."

Dr. Maimon said discussions of the implications of various budget scenarios in the Budget and Finance Committee could be summed up in one word: uncertainty. Because of this, she said it is of the utmost importance to get GSU's story told and asked for everyone to look for occasions to talk to others about GSU's contribution to the state—in the context of the university's mission and strategic plan.

"In the last five fiscal years, GSU's state appropriations have decreased 15 percent (from roughly 28.3 million to 24.6 million). In that same period GSU has grown the number of credit hours by 13.2 percent, the highest growth rate for a public, four-year university in the state of Illinois. While our appropriations have decreased, we have grown 13.2 percent," Dr. Maimon said.

In addition to the increases in student credit hours in the last five years, GSU's spring credit hours for 2015 are also up 12.58 percent. The percentage of full time students from Spring 2014 to Spring 2015 increased 7.06 percent, and the number of international students from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 increased 95.8 percent, from 118 to 231 students, Dr. Maimon said.

Chair Mitchell noted that he agreed now is the time for the GSU community to rally together to tell its story, including to legislators. "We have a great story, one full of successes and giant steps forward. I encourage you to share that story, everywhere and with everyone," he said. "We want our story to get from here to Springfield."

#### **GSU Promise Nearing Important Milestone**

Dr. Maimon reported that the GSU Promise Scholarship was approaching the milestone of becoming GSU's first million dollar scholarship endowment thanks to a recent \$300,000 bequest from an alumnus—the largest in university history.

The scholarship makes it possible for community college transfer students to complete their bachelor's degrees free from crushing debt. It is currently \$107,000 away from the \$1 million mark and a "mini-campaign" has been launched to reach the goal. "We are asking everyone—previous donors, new donors, faculty, staff, students, and trustees to make a one-time additional gift to the Promise," she said.

#### **Classroom Renovation Project**

With increased enrollment and the addition of freshmen and sophomores, the demand for additional classrooms has become increasingly urgent. With proposed budget cuts looming, a project to renovate classrooms will be done in stages. The first stage will be to consider redoing space in the D wing [construction, mechanical upgrades, lighting, computer equipment, and furniture] to create six classrooms, of which five will hold a minimum of 48 students. The start dates for the project may be delayed until June or July when the funding situation may become clearer.

#### **Wired and Wireless Infrastructure**

The board was notified that GSU has issued contracts to vendors and contractors to upgrade the university's wired and wireless infrastructure. The project is within budget and on track of the targeted completion date of June 30, 2015. Board Chairman Brian Mitchell was pleased with the initiatives, which benefit GSU students. "We have heard today about resourceful, thoughtful uses of our funds. And we can be assured that our students' needs are foremost in everyone's minds. The wired and wireless infrastructure renovation is a great example. Renovating existing space into useable classrooms is another. Both will allow us to better serve our students," he said.

#### **Transfer of Tenure Approved**

The board approved a resolution from the Human Resources Committee to transfer tenure within the College of Arts and Sciences from the Division of Science to the Division of Chemistry and Biological Sciences (CBS) and the Division of Computing, Mathematics and Technology (CMT) effective March 1, 2015.

#### **Emeritus Status Conferred to Drs. Keys and Mayfield**

Upon the recommendation of President Maimon, and the concurrence of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Board of Trustees conferred Professor Emeritus status to Dr. Paul R. Keys and Dr. Sandra A. Mayfield.

### **Smoke-Free Campus Beginning July 1**

GSU will enforce the Smoke-Free Campus Act beginning on July 1, 2015, and will prohibit smoking and tobacco use on any campus location. The benefits of transitioning to a smoke- and tobacco-free campus include: healthier campus environment for the community; limiting exposure to secondhand smoke, or tobacco use; and cleaner campus grounds.

### **Copier Fleet OK'd**

The board also awarded a three-year contract to Konica Minolta Business Solutions, USA Inc. of Ramsey, New Jersey for the copier/duplicator fleet upgrade and service program for the university.

## **EVENTS**

### **Graduate School Fair March 7**



GRE test-taking strategies, choosing the right graduate program and financing your education are all topics that will be discussed at the Graduate Program Open House at GSU on March 7, 2015, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Attendees will learn from expert breakout sessions designed to answer questions about these important issues.

"We understand that the decision to go to graduate school is an important one and accurate, helpful information is needed," said Dr. Elizabeth Cada, Dean of Graduate Studies at GSU. "This Open House will provide prospective students with the guidance they need to make the best decision for their careers and their futures."

Governors State University offers 28 master's degree programs, one specialist degree program and five professional doctoral degree programs as well as 17 graduate-level certificates in a variety of areas from healthcare to business and education to arts and sciences.

The GSU Graduate Open House is free and open to the public. Advance registration is requested by February 27. To register, go to [www.govst.edu/grad-openhouse](http://www.govst.edu/grad-openhouse). For more information, call (708) 534-4086 or [janderson13@govst.edu](mailto:janderson13@govst.edu).

## **NEWS**

### **GSU Nears First \$1 Million Scholarship Endowment**

Governors State is on the verge of a significant milestone in its history. The GSU Promise Scholarship is close to becoming the university's first million dollar scholarship endowment. Current students are encouraged to help reach the goal by May 16, which is Commencement Day at GSU.

The excitement over reaching the million dollar plateau is because as a permanent endowment fund, GSU will use the interest to help today's students and support students for decades to come. Using the interest in the endowment means funding won't have to come from other sources, allowing those dollars to be used elsewhere as needed.

According to GSU President Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, in order to reach the goal, all of GSU's constituents are being encouraged to give, including current students.

"If every current GSU student gives one or five dollars to this scholarship fund, we will be well on our way to reaching our goal. This endowment fund will benefit not only GSU students in future years, but also today's students. The Promise Scholarship helps students who might not otherwise get the opportunity to get their bachelor's degree. Part of our mission is to offer an exceptional and accessible education, and the Promise Scholarship helps us do that," she said.

The endowment funds scholarships that make it possible for community college transfer students to complete their bachelor's degree free from crushing debt. The scholarship is open to Dual Degree Program (DDP) students and covers the full cost of tuition, fees, and books that is not covered by the student's Pell and MAP award grants.

William Davis, GSU Vice President for Development, noted that by donating to the Promise Scholarship, students will be leaving a legacy for those who follow. "We need all students to give, but we are especially encouraging this year's senior class to put their senior class gift toward the GSU Promise."

Students interested in contributing to the GSU Promise, can go to the scholarship website at: <http://www.govst.edu/DonationForm/>

## **Do You Qualify for Tax Breaks? Find out with #TaxBreaks4Students**



GSU is partnering with Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL), 22 other state higher education institutions and 26 national associations in a publicity campaign to encourage eligible students and families to take the education tax breaks for which they qualify and to help increase understanding of these benefits. The #TaxBreaks4Students campaign will run during the week of March 2nd.

According to Congressman Davis, millions of students each year miss out on tax breaks. "Tax-based education aid represents more than half of all non-loan federal aid, playing an important role in promoting college affordability and completion. Unfortunately, the complexity of education tax benefits makes it difficult for students to understand whether they qualify for a benefit and which benefit best meets their needs. Indeed, a study by the Government Accountability Office showed that 1.5 million tax filers who qualified for either the Tuition and Fees Deduction or the Lifetime Learning Credit did not claim the credit or deduction. Many families do not realize that, even if they did not make enough money to owe taxes, the American Opportunity Tax Credit provides up to \$1000 for certain education

expenses. I'm proud to join together with critical education stakeholders on this campaign to educate today's students and families about the two education credits likely to help them the most – the American Opportunity Tax Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit."

See if you qualify, go to: <http://go.usa.gov/Jvej>.

## SAVE THE DATE

### myGSU Portal To Be Updated Over Spring Break



The myGSU portal will be updated during Spring Break, March 16-20. Keep watching for announcements in the portal regarding information that contain screen shots and tutorials.

#### Facebook Posts of the Week



*Response to our GSU Alums Who Won Elections in Aldermanic Races post:*  
**Rosalind Dulaney** GSU doing big things #proudalum



*Response to our Graduate School Fair post:*  
**Kevin Kredens** Governors State University is a diamond in the prairie!

**Do you have a story or event you want to submit for the GSU View?**

[Click here to learn about our submission guidelines.](#)



**Governors State University**

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